

Teaching Secondary Reading

A Resource for Improving Academic Literacy with Adolescents

Sample General Enduring Understandings for Writing

Big Idea: Writing Content

Students will understand that:

- There are many reasons for students to write, including writing-to-learn, writing-to-demonstrate learning, and writing for authentic purposes and audiences.
- Different forms of writing are appropriate for different purposes and audiences and have different features (e.g., personal narrative, informational reports/articles, poetry, response to text).
- To be effective, writing must be a sufficiently developed, coherent unit of thought to address the needs of the intended audience.
- Writing can be used to make meaning of one's own experience, as well as of other information/ ideas.

Big Idea: Writing Structure

Students will understand that:

- Sentences must be complete and clear. Variety in sentence structure helps to engage the reader and make meaning more clear. Sometimes, unconventional sentence structure is appropriate for an intended effect upon the reader.
- Different types of structures are appropriate for different purposes, audiences, and different forms of writing. Paragraphs and whole texts must be unified and coherent.
- Structural elements such as context, meaningful order of ideas, transitional elements, and conclusion all help make meaning clear for the reader.

Big Idea: Writing Conventions

Students will understand that:

- Writers need to choose their words/language with care, depending on the content, purpose, and audience.
- Language should be concise and precise. Strong verbs and nouns, concrete details, and sensory language help make meaning clear to the reader.
- Standard grammar and usage are important in making meaning clear to the reader; nonstandard or unconventional grammar may be used for intended effect.
- Writers need to use correct spelling, punctuation, and capitalization.
- Writers need to document sources/give credit for the ideas of others.

Big Idea: Writing Process

Students will understand that:

- The writing process is a helpful tool in constructing and demonstrating meaning of content (whether personal, expressive, academic, or practical) through writing.
- The stages are sometimes recursive (e.g. in the process of revising, a writer sometimes returns to earlier stages of the process).
- Writers work through the process at different rates. Often, the process is enhanced by conferencing with others.